

EMANCIPATION
PROCLAMATION
+ Lincoln

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Emancipation Proclamation

Abraham Lincoln

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

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SERENADE TO PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

HIS SPEECH.

1865
Washington, 2d. In response to a serenade last night President Lincoln said he supposed the passage through Congress of the Constitutional Amendment for abolishing slavery throughout the United States was the occasion to which he was indebted for the honor of this call. (Applause.)

The occasion was one of congratulation to the country and to the whole world. But there is a task yet before us to go forward and consummate by the votes of the states, that which Congress so nobly began yesterday. (Applause, and cries they will do it.)

He had the honor to inform those present that Illinois had already today done the work. (Applause.) Maryland was about half through, but he felt proud that Illinois was a little ahead. He thought this measure was a very fitting, if not an indispensable adjunct to the winding up of the great difficulty (Applause.)

He wished the Union of all the States perfected and so effected as to remove all causes of disturbance in the future, and to obtain this end it was necessary that the original disturbing cause should, if possible, be rooted out.

He thought all would bear him witness that he had never shrunk from doing all that he could to eradicate slavery by issuing an emancipation proclamation (applause); but that proclamation falls far short of what the amendment will be when fully consummated.

A question might be raised whether the proclamation was legally valid. It might be added that it only aided those who came into our lines and that it was inoperative as to those who did not give themselves up, or that it would have no effect upon children of slaves born hereafter.

In fact it would be urged that it did not meet the evil, but this amendment is a king's cure for all evils. (Applause.) It winds the whole thing up.

He would repeat that it was the fitting, if not indispensable, adjunct to the consummation of the great game we are playing. He could not but congratulate all present, the country, the whole world, and himself upon this great moral victory.

The Steps by Which Mr. Lincoln Was Brought to the Issue of His Proclamation.

1883

Schuyler Colfax in Boston Congregationalist:

Born, as the great emancipator was, in a family of "poor whites," in a slave state and his father moving away from it to raise his children in a free state, hostility to slavery was naturally one of his earliest principles. But, while radical in his convictions, he was always conservative in his methods. And, as President, the success of the national cause was uppermost in his thoughts, immeasurably higher than all other considerations, personal, political or humanitarian. Urged, as he was by his most powerful political friends from the very opening of the rebellion, to strike at slavery, he forbore until he had tested and exhausted every other method, and then approached it very slowly, very thoughtfully and very conscientiously. Indeed, he quite incensed many of his political faith by declaring publicly that, if he could save the Union without destroying slavery, he would certainly do so. His paramount duty, he felt, was to save the Nation from destruction, and everything must be subordinated to that duty.

But, when the rebellion had continued a full year, and it was evident beyond all question that forbearance had ceased to be a virtue, he felt that the hour of action had struck. His first movement was characteristic. After a message to Congress, urging compensated emancipation for the slaves in the border states, leaving only eight or nine states interested in the maintenance of the rebellion, he invited the thirty border state congressmen to a free conference with him upon this question at the White House. They met him, about the middle of July, in accordance with his request, and he pressed them with every argument he could command to favor this plan. But, after a full and frank interchange of views, he found no favor shown to his proposition by any of them, except those who were already understood to be anti-slavery in their convictions; while the rest were decidedly unfavorable in their comments.

As he told me afterward, "when the last coat-tail of these members had passed out of the executive chamber," he determined that "the time had arrived for him to strike at the institution with the battle-axe of the national power." He wrote, within a few days thereafter, in July, 1862, the first draft of the Emancipation Proclamation, and read this original draft to my mother and myself in November following (two months after he had published the September proclamation), to illustrate to us how he had progressed, step by step, to the final consummation. As first written—and I fear this original draft was destroyed as I have never seen it since, in manuscript or in print—he declared slavery abolished in all the dis-

tricts of the slave States, which were unrepresented in Congress, from the date of his signature, without any delay whatever. And after writing it he called his cabinet together in special meeting, about the last of July, to read it to them.

He opened this extra session of his cabinet, which they knew was to consider this great question, by reading them a humorous article by Artemus Ward but threw it down as he completed it, saying, substantially, and with a marked change in his tone and manner: "This is not what I called you here for to-day, but to listen to a document I have resolved to sign and publish, the entire responsibility of which I shall take on myself, only asking your opinion as to its phraseology." [I have no doubt that the reading of the comic sketch was on account of the great mental pressure upon him of the act he was contemplating. I recall another occasion when, almost heartbroken, as he told me he was, over recent reverses, he took up and read a witty letter about himself, by Orpheus C. Kerr, to some alarm congressmen who entered the room after I did to inquire nervously about the outlook.]

After reading his manuscript with solemn deliberation to its closing line, "Done at the city of Washington," etc., Secretary Chase, who had been walking up and down the room, broke the silence by an important suggestion, which has linked his name forever with this great act.

Said he: "Mr. President, you say you do not ask our opinion about this proclamation, and you know very well how heartily I am in favor of it. But I confess I do not like the language with which it concludes. That would answer for some formal proclamation about a treaty or something of that kind. But this is far more momentous, and I think should end quite differently."

"Well," replied Mr. Lincoln, "what do you suggest, Chase?"

The Secretary of the Treasury must have thought about this grand sentence previously, as he could scarcely improvise it on the instant, for he replied instantaneously that he would conclude such an important document as this, about as follows: "And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God."

Secretary Seward, who was sitting at the President's right hand, had an inkstand near him, and Mr. Lincoln asked him to reduce Secretary Chase's suggestion to writing. But, while complying, Mr. Seward remarked: "I think after the words 'warranted by the constitution,' I would add, 'upon military necessity,' as that would bring the act more distinctly within the war power."

"You are right, Seward; add those words," responded Mr. Lincoln.

When these impressive words were written out, Secretary Seward paused and said: "Mr. Lincoln, I have another suggestion to make about this document, if you wish to hear it."

"Certainly, what is it?" responded the President.

"I fear," said Mr. Seward, "we have met with such reverses and checks this summer, that if you issue this proclamation now, it will be regarded as a kind of forlorn hope, born of despair. It will be considered, not as a boon to Ethiopia, but as holding out our hands to Ethiopia and crying for help."

"What do you advise then about it?" asked Mr. Lincoln.

"Withhold it, by all means," replied Mr. Seward, "till our armies have won an important victory somewhere, and then publish it to the world without further delay."

After a moment's thought, Mr. Lincoln replied: "Seward, you're right, and I will wait."

Nearly two months passed away, and no Union victory had been won since that important cabinet conference in the closing days of July. Meanwhile Mr. Lincoln became satisfied, from his constant reflection upon the subject, that the proclamation, when issued, would command greater popular support at the North, and possibly, therefore, be more potential toward the salvation of the Union, which, to him was above all else, if he changed its phraseology further. He accordingly wrote in its stead the draft of a preliminary proclamation, warning all interested in slavery that, if the rebellion did not cease its assaults on the life of the nation within a certain specified time, he would follow it with a second proclamation, which should be aimed directly at the institution itself. And then he waited for the Union victory which was to be the signal for this important movement—how anxiously and how excitedly few of us can realize.

At last, in mid September, rumors flashed into Washington that the Army of the Potomac had, after a hard-fought battle, won a great victory at Antietam. But such unofficial reports had so often changed into tidings of reverse that the President still hesitated. He told me that while waiting for one or two days of confirmation of the news, he paced the floor for hours at a time, unable otherwise to control his feelings. While thus wearily waiting, in the most intense excitement, Secretary Stanton hurriedly entered the executive chamber with the glad news that a long special telegram was at that very hour going over the wires to a New York paper with the details; that the battle had resulted in a decisive victory, and that a copy of the dispatch was coming

into the War Department telegraph office as fast as it was being received there.

The hour had struck at last! On the 22d of September, the President hurled his thunderbolt against this powerful institution, before which Presidents and courts, Congresses and parties had quailed, but whose "right," under the constitution and Union, it had so unwisely jeopardized by its bloody war against both.

The Confederate government, its Congress and Cabinet, its generals and editors, laughed this preliminary proclamation to scorn—another proof of the truthfulness of the ancient axiom: "Whom the Gods wish to destroy they first make mad." They made merry over its threat that, if the rebellion did not cease before the year ended, he would destroy the institution which they had revolted to establish as the corner-stone of their new nation. More days, and weeks and months slowly passed away. Reverses came to the President's political organizations in the fall elections, from the Atlantic to the Mississippi river. But Mr. Lincoln's purpose was as unshaken as the eternal hills. The New Year's day of 1863 dawned, and the President's official reception was held. How well do I remember his looks on that memorable day. The sad face, even when smiling at valued friends as they passed; the eyes that seemed to have had less than their needed sleep, and the firmly compressed lips. He seemed, as he often did, not only to have the woes and trials of our Nation on his great heart, but to be looking away down on the vista of future centuries.

Finally, the army and the navy officers in their uniform of war, the foreign ministers with their decorations, the Supreme Court and the congressmen, had all spoken their New Year's greeting and had gone. And then the thousands of "the common people," for whom he always had such great regard and sincere sympathy, for he felt he was one of them and from them, passed by him in rapid procession, many of them wringing his hand in their hearty greeting. The clock struck 2, and the reception was over. But the great work of that day with him had yet to be done. And it was done.

That evening he said to me and several other friends whom he had admitted to his room: "I have done the deed. My signature looks tremulous, for three hours' hand-shaking don't improve a man's chirography. But my resolution never was more firm." And then with a solemn tone I can never forget, he added:

"The South has had a fair warning. For I told them in September if they did not return to their allegiance, and cease warring on the Union, I would strike at this pillar of their strength. And now the promise shall be kept; and not one word of it will I ever recall."

and therefore as the English of the world. To what extent these favorable elements are present should perhaps be left for foreign eyes as unprejudiced and friendly as those, for instance, of Professor Bryce to discover. But Americans who see the enormously increasing population of their country, brought from all quarters of the globe into stimulating contact with new phases of nature and life, stirred by contagious, restless, New World activity, and amassing enormous wealth, and believe that throughout this mass of humanity there is a strenuous intelligence and an eagerness and capacity for mental growth paralleled nowhere else, may be pardoned for thinking that the elements demanded cannot be lacking. That we possess the last-mentioned requirement, readiness to adapt and change, certainly cannot be denied. Not the least notable evidence of it is, for example, our comparatively great openness to conviction in the direction of a scientific and practical simplification of our spelling. Thus one can hardly imagine that, as has happened on the other side, if our Philological Association were constructing a great English dictionary which from its nature must be quite independent of popular support, it would practically throw its influence in favor of the most conservative and certainly obsolescent orthography. It is also worth noting that our temper in this direction is precisely that which is needed to make English, what all who speak it hope it will be, the universal language of the future commercial, as French has been of the past political and social world. In a word, the hope that the English language as spoken by our descendants will be its dominant and most widely adopted form is entirely reasonable, and the determination that it shall be such is a worthy national ambition.

Lincoln's Disinterestedness.

THE very heart and substance of the authorized Life of Lincoln are to be found in the installments published in THE CENTURY for December, January, February, and March. No quality that helped to make Lincoln one of the ablest as well as one of the noblest of men fails of illustration in these thrilling chapters. We say thrilling, because we believe that no intelligent student of history — especially no patriotic American of any party or locality — can read these pages without emotion. Has the mental history of a single sublime and world-approved act ever before been so minutely and authoritatively described? The published and hitherto unpublished documents, letters, records of companions, and reported conversations are here gathered together by his private secretaries and displayed in orderly and lucid array. So interesting is every paragraph that one longs for even fuller information — but as it is, the data are full beyond precedent.

As is well known, there were, technically speaking, two Emancipation Proclamations, the preliminary one of September, 1862, and the final proclamation of January 1, 1863, which carried out in due course the programme of executive action laid down in the preceding document. As it was the January edict which actually gave freedom to the colored race in America, it is this

which is generally called the great "Emancipation Proclamation." But the two documents are really one act, and it was the September utterance that reverberated through the world and put forward the march of civilization. For this reason the present installment of the Life is illustrated with facsimiles of both documents — preceded by the original draft, which never appeared till given to the public by Messrs. Nicolay and Hay, in the December CENTURY. It was this original draft with which Lincoln surprised his Cabinet in July, 1862, and it has a peculiar interest as showing how the official utterance first shaped itself in his mind. In the present installment the authors give (on pp. 691 and 699) the first draft of the proclamation of January 1, 1863, as well as the facsimile of the document in its final shape.

One cannot but be impressed anew by the fact that one of the most effective equipments of Lincoln for the performance of difficult duties was a quality which he shared with Washington, and which each possessed to a conspicuous degree — the simple but tremendously powerful quality of disinterestedness. It was tact, *i. e.*, intelligence added to kindness, which helped make Washington a successful leader; it was tact which helped Lincoln to steer his Administration not only through the perils of war but between the rocks of selfishness and faction — but without purity of purpose, without absolute disinterestedness, neither could have done so well, so completely, the work assigned.

With the enormous and enormously increasing populations, the seething social movements, and the ever-threatening political dangers of the New World, there are not and never will be times of perfect peace and quiet. Every Administration, every Congress, State, community, every year, every day, has its emergency. In our uncertain and ever-shifting scheme of general and local governments good men, bad men, half-good and half-bad men, are continually pushing or being pushed to the front as leaders. Now and again an unscrupulous schemer attains a notable official or unofficial eminence; and his disgraceful and pestiferous "success" tends towards the imitation of his methods on the part of men of easy consciences. The example of Washington, the centennial of whose inauguration is so near at hand, and of Lincoln, who was with us only yesterday, and whose pure and devoted life is now being told for the first time — there will never be a moment when the example of these men will cease to be among the most saving forces of the nation.

It would be a poor investment of energy to talk to some busy and party-honored dispenser of corruption funds or political bargainer with liquor-dealers about the public virtues of Washington and Lincoln; but to the young, or to those who in public life still retain somewhat of the delicacy of innocence, it is always worth while to uphold our most prominent instances of political success, and to repeat continually that selfishness is weakness; that honesty is strength; that disinterestedness is a mighty weapon and often the only one wherewith a man may do what with his whole heart he desires to do.

He Was Willing to Save or Destroy Slavery to Preserve the Union.

Lincoln Was Not a Sentimental Abolitionist—Earnest Efforts for Compensated Emancipation—His Eloquent Appeals to the Border State Representatives.

Special Correspondence of the Globe-Democrat.
PHILADELPHIA, P.A., February 17.—Abraham Lincoln was not a sentimental Abolitionist. Indeed, he was not a sentimentalist on any subject. He was a man of earnest conviction and of sublime devotion to his faith. In many of his public letters and state papers he was as poetic as he was epigrammatic. He was singularly felicitous in the pathos that was so often interwoven with his irresistible logic, but he never contemplated the abolition of slavery until the events of the war not only made it clearly possible, but made it an imperious necessity. As the sworn Executive of the nation it was his duty to obey the Constitution in all its provisions, and he accepted that duty without reservation. He knew that slavery was the immediate cause of the political disturbance that culminated in civil war, and I know that he believed from the beginning that it war should be persisted in, it could end only in the severance of the Union or the destruction



ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

of slavery. His supreme desire was peace, alike before the war, during the war and in closing the war. He exhausted every means within his power to teach the Southern people that slavery could not be disturbed by his administration as long as they themselves obeyed the Constitution and laws which protected slavery, and he never uttered a word or did an act to justify, or even excuse, the South in assuming that he meant to make any warfare upon the institution of slavery beyond protecting the free territories from its desolating tread.

It was not until the war had been in progress for nearly two years that Lincoln decided to proclaim the policy of emancipation, and then he was careful to assume the power as warranted under the Constitution only by the supreme necessities of war. There was no time from the inauguration of Lincoln until the 1st of January, 1863, that the South could not have returned to the Union with slavery intact in every State. His preliminary proclamation, dated September 22, 1862, gave notice that on the 1st of January, 1863, he would by public proclamation, "warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity," declare that "all persons held as slaves within any State, or designated part of the State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be thenceforward and forever free." Every insurgent State had thus more than three months' formal notice that the war was not prosecuted for the abolition of slavery, but solely for the restoration of the Union, and that they could, by returning and accepting the authority of the National Government at any time before the 1st of January, 1863, preserve slavery in-

definitely. Lincoln's letter to Horace Greeley, written just one month before his preliminary emancipation proclamation, has already been quoted in those articles. It presents in the clearest and most concise manner Lincoln's views on the subject of slavery and the Union. After saying that if he could save the Union without freeing any slaves he would do it; that if he could do it by freeing all the slaves he would do it, and that if he could save it by freeing some and leaving others he would also do that, he adds: "What I do about slavery and the colored race I do because I believe it helps to save the Union, and what I forbear I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union."

As President of the Republic, Lincoln was governed at every step by his paramount duty to prevent the dismemberment of the nation and to restore the Union and its people to fraternal relations. The best expression of his own views and aims in the matter is given in a single brief sentence, uttered by himself on the 13th of September, 1862, only nine days before he issued the preliminary proclamation. It was in response to an appeal from a large delegation of Chicago clergymen, representing nearly or quite all the religious denominations of that city, urging immediate emancipation. He heard them patiently, as he always did those who were entitled to be heard at all, and his answer was given in these words: "I have not decided against the proclamation of liberty to the slaves, but hold the matter under advisement, and I can assure you the matter is on my mind by day and by night more than any other. Whatever shall appear to be God's will I will do." However, Lincoln's religious views may be disputed, he had a profound belief in God and in God's immutable justice, and the sentence I have just quoted tells the whole story of Lincoln's action in the abolition of slavery. He did not expect miracles; indeed, he was one of the last men to believe in miracles at all, but he did believe that God overruled all human actions; that all individuals charged with grave responsibility were but the means in the hands of the Great Ruler to accomplish the fulfillment of justice. Congressman Arnold, whom Lincoln once declared to me to be the member of the House in whose personal and political friendship he had absolute faith, speaking of the earnest appeals made to Lincoln for emancipation, says: "Mr. Lincoln listened unmoved to such appeals, and seeking prayerful guidance of Almighty God, the proclamation of emancipation was prepared. It had been, in fact, prepared in July, 1862."

Thus from July until September, during which time there was the greatest possible pressure on Lincoln for an emancipation policy, his proclamation had been formulated, but his usual caution had prevented him from intimating it to any outside of his Cabinet. It was the gravest step ever taken by any civil ruler in this or any other land, and military success was essential to maintain and execute the policy of emancipation after it had been declared. Had McClellan been successful in his Peninsula campaign, or had Lee been defeated in the second conflict of Manassas, without bringing peace, the proclamation would doubtless have been issued with the prestige of such victory. Under the shivering hesitation among even Republicans throughout the North, Lincoln felt that it needed the prestige of a military victory to assure its cordial acceptance by very many of the supporters of the Government. The battle of Antietam, fought by the only General of that time who had publicly declared against an emancipation policy, was the first victory the Army of the Potomac had achieved in 1862, and five days after the Antietam victory the preliminary proclamation was issued.

Only the careful student of the history of the war can have any just conception of the gradual manner in which Lincoln approached emancipation. He long and earnestly sought to avoid it, believing then that the Union could be best preserved without the violent destruction of slavery, and when he appreciated the fact that the leaders of the rebellion were unwilling to entertain any proposition for the restoration of the Union, he accepted the destruction of slavery as an imperious necessity, but he sought to attain it with the least possible disturbance. The first direct assault made upon slavery was by Secretary Cameron's overruled annual report in December, 1861, in which he advised the arming of slaves. The first Con-

gress that sat during the war made steady strides toward the destruction of slavery by the passage of five important laws. The first abolished slavery in the District of Columbia; the second prohibited slavery in all the Territories of the United States; the third gave freedom to the escaped slaves of all who were in rebellion; the fourth gave lawful authority for the enlistment of colored men as soldiers, and the fifth made a new article of war, prohibiting any one in the military or naval service from aiding in the arrest or return of a fugitive slave under pain of dismissal. Slavery was abolished in the District of Columbia as early as April, 1862, having passed the Senate by 29 to 6 and the House by 92 to 38. A bill prohibiting slavery in the Territories was passed on the 19th of June, and a bill giving freedom to slaves of rebellious masters who performed military service was passed on the 17th of July.

Thus was Congress steadily advancing toward emancipation, and as early as March, 1862, Lincoln had proposed his plan of compensated emancipation. On the 6th of March he sent a special message to Congress recommending the adoption of the following joint resolution:

Resolved, That the United States ought to cooperate with any State which may adopt gradual abolition of slavery, giving to such State pecuniary aid, to be used by such State in its discretion, to compensate for the inconvenience, public and private, produced by such change of system.

His message very earnestly pressed upon Congress the importance of adopting such a policy, and upon the country the importance of accepting it, North and South. His concluding sentence is: "In full view of my great responsibility to my God and to my country, I earnestly beg the attention of Congress and the people to the subject." Again, when revoking Gen. Hunter's order of the 9th of May, 1862, declaring all slaves free within his military district, Lincoln made a most impressive appeal to the people of the South on the subject of compensated emancipation. He said: "I do not argue; I beseech you to make the argument for yourselves. You can not, if you would, be blind to the signs of the times. * * * The change it contemplates would come gently as the dews of heaven, not rending or wrecking anything. Will you not embrace it? So much good has not been done by any one effort in all past time as, in the providence of God, it is now your high privilege to do. May the vast future not have to lament that you have neglected it." Soon after this Lincoln had an interview with the congressional delegations from the border slave States, at which he again earnestly urged them to accept compensated emancipation. Speaking of that interview Lincoln said: "I believed that the indispensable necessity for military emancipation and arming the blacks would come unless averted by gradual and compensated emancipation." Again in July, 1862, only two months before he issued the preliminary proclamation, Lincoln summoned the delegates from the border slave States to a conference with him, and again most persuasively appealed to them to accept gradual and compensated emancipation. He said to them: "I do not speak of emancipation at once, but of a decision at once to emancipate gradually." He also clearly foreshadowed to them that if they refused it more violent emancipation must come. He said: "The pressure in this direction is still upon me and is increasing. By conceding what I now ask you can relieve me and much more can relieve the country on this important point." He concluded with these eloquent words: "Our common country is in great peril, demanding the loftiest views and boldest action to bring a speedy relief. Once relieved, its form of government is saved to the world; its beloved history and cherished memories are vindicated, and its happy future fully assured and rendered inconceivably grand. To you, more than to any others, the privilege is given to assure that happiness and well that grandeur and to link your names therewith forever."

Strange as it may now seem, in view of the inevitable tendency of events at that time, these appeals of Lincoln were not only treated with contempt by those in rebellion, but the border State Congressmen, who had everything at stake, and who in the end were compelled to accept forcible emancipation without compensation, although themselves not directly involved in rebellion, made no substantial response to Lincoln's efforts to save their States and people. Thus did the States in rebellion disregard repeated importunities from Lincoln to accept emancipation with payment for their slaves. During long weary months he made temperate utterance on every possible occasion, and by every official act that could direct the attention of the country, he sought to attain the least violent solution of the slavery problem, only to learn the bitter lesson that slavery would make no terms with the Government, and that it was the aspiration of rebellious armies seeking the destruction of the republic. Soon after his appeal to the Congressmen of the border States in July, 1862, Lincoln prepared his emancipation proclama-

tion, and quietly and patiently waited the fullness of time for proclaiming it, still hoping that peace might come without resort to the extreme measure of military and uncompensated emancipation. Seeing that the last hope of any other method of peace had failed, he issued the preliminary proclamation on the 22d of September, 1862, and his final proclamation on the 1st of January following, and there never was a day from that time until Lincoln's death that he ever entertained, even for a moment, the question of receding from the freedom he had proclaimed to the slaves. But while he was compelled to accept the issue of revolutionary emancipation, he never abandoned the idea of compensated emancipation until the final overthrow of Lee's army in 1865. He proposed it to his Cabinet in February of that year, only to be unanimously rejected, and I personally know that he would have suggested it to Stephens, Campbell and Hunter at the Hampton Roads conference in February, 1865, had not Vice President Stephens, as the immediate representative of Jefferson Davis, frankly stated at the outset that he was instructed not to entertain or discuss any proposition that did not recognize the perpetuity of the Confederacy. That statement from Stephens precluded the possibility of Lincoln making any proposition, or even suggestion, whatever on the subject. In a personal interview with Jefferson Davis, when I was a visitor in his house at Beauvoir, Miss., fifteen years after the close of the war, I asked him whether he had ever received any intimation about Lincoln's desire to close the war by the payment of \$400,000,000 for emancipated slaves. He said that he had not heard of it. I asked him whether he would have given such instructions to Stephens if he had possessed knowledge of the fact. He answered that he could not have given Stephens any other instructions than he did under the circumstances, because, as President of the Confederacy, he could not entertain any question involving its dissolution, that being a subject entirely for the States themselves.

Lincoln treated the emancipation question from the beginning as a very grave matter-of-fact problem, to be solved for or against the destruction of slavery, as the safety of the Union might dictate. He refrained from emancipation for eighteen months after the war had begun simply because he believed during that time that he might best save the Union by saving slavery, and had the development of events proved that belief to be correct he would have permitted slavery to live with the Union. When he became fully convinced that the safety of the Government demanded the destruction of slavery, he decided, after the most patient and exhaustive consideration of the subject, to proclaim his emancipation policy. It was not founded solely or even chiefly on the sentiment of hostility to slavery. If it had been, the proclamation would have declared slavery abolished in every State in the Union; but he excluded the slave States of Delaware, Maryland, Tennessee and Missouri, and certain parishes in Louisiana, and certain counties in Virginia, from the operation of the proclamation, declaring, in the instrument that has now become immortal, that "which excepted parts are for the present left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued." Thus, if only military emancipation had been achieved by the President's proclamation, it would have presented the singular spectacle of Tennessee in the heart of the South, Maryland and Delaware north of the Potomac, and nearly one-half of Louisiana and one-half of Virginia with slavery protected, while freedom was accorded to the slaves of all the other slaveholding States. Lincoln evidently regarded the emancipation policy as the most momentous in the history of American statesmanship, and that it was justified only by the extreme necessity of weakening the rebellion that then threatened the severance of the Union.

From the very day of his inauguration until he issued his emancipation proclamation Lincoln was constantly importuned by the more radical element of his supporters to declare his purpose to abolish slavery. Among them were a number of the ablest leaders of his party in the Senate and House, and some of them as impracticable in their methods as they were imperious in their demands. That he was glad of the opportunity to destroy slavery none can doubt who knew him, but he patiently bore the often irritating complaints of many of his friends until he saw that slavery and the Union could not survive together, and that the country was at least measurably prepared to accept and support the new policy. He was many times threat-

ened with open rebellion against his administration by some of the most potent Republicans because of his delay in declaring the emancipation policy, but he waited until the time had come, in the fall of 1862, when he felt that it was not only a war necessity but a political necessity as well. Another very grave consideration that led him to accept emancipation when he did was the peril of England and France recognizing the Confederacy and thereby involving us in war with two of the greatest Powers of Europe. The pretext on which was based the opposition of England to the Union cause in the early part of the war was the maintenance of slavery by the Government while prosecuting a war against a slave-holders' rebellion, and it seemed to be an absolute necessity that our Government should accept the emancipation policy to impair the force of the public sentiment in England that demanded the recognition of the South as an independent Government. These three weighty considerations, each in itself sufficient to have decided Lincoln's action, combined to dictate his emancipation policy in the early fall of 1862. The proclamation did not in itself abolish slavery, but the positive declaration in the proclamation "that the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons," gave notice to every slave-holder, and promise to every slave, that every bondman brought within the lines of the Union army would thereafter be forever free.

While the emancipation proclamation inflicted a mortal wound upon slavery and assured its absolute extinction, sooner or later, throughout the entire country, Lincoln fully appreciated the fact that much was yet to be done, even beyond victories in the field, to efface the blot of slavery from the republic. As early as the 14th of January, 1863, Representative Wilson, of Iowa, then Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, and now a United States Senator, reported a proposed amendment to the Constitution declaring slavery "forever prohibited in the United States." On the 10th of February, 1864, Senator Trumbull reported from the Judiciary Committee of that body a proposed amendment that was finally adopted in 1865 and is now part of the fundamental law of the nation. It was passed in that body on the 18th of April by a vote of 38 to 6. It was defeated in the House by a vote of 93 in its favor and 65 against it, lacking the requisite two-thirds. Seeing that the amendment was lost, Ashley, of Ohio, changed his vote from the affirmative to the negative with a view of entering a motion to reconsider, and the subject went over until the next session. On the 6th of January, 1865, Ashley made his motion to reconsider and called up the proposed amendment for another vote. One of the most interesting and able debates of that time was precipitated by Ashley's motion, and the notable speech of the occasion was made by Mr. Rollins, of Missouri, who had been a large slaveholder, and who declared that "the rebellion instigated and carried on by slave-holders has been the death-knell of the institution." Stevens, the great apostle of freedom from Pennsylvania and the Commander of the war, closed the debate, and probably on no other occasion in the history of Congress was such intense anxiety exhibited as when the roll was called on the adoption or rejection of the amendment. The Republicans did not have two-thirds of the House, but several Democrats openly favored the amendment, and a number of others were known to be uncertain. The first break in the Democratic line was when the name of Coffroth, of Pennsylvania, was called, who promptly answered aye, and was greeted with thunders of applause in the House and galleries. He was followed by Ganson, Herrick, Nelson, Odell, Radford and Steele, Democrats from New York, and by McAlister, from Pennsylvania, and when the Speaker declared that the amendment had been adopted by 119 yeas to 56 nays, being more than the requisite constitutional majority, the great battle of emancipation was substantially won, and Lincoln hailed it with a measure of joy second only to his delight at the announcement of Lee's surrender. Before the members left their seats salvos of artillery announced to the people of the capital that the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery had been adopted by Congress, and the victorious leaders rushed to the White House to congratulate Lincoln on the final achievement of emancipation.

The acceptance of the proposed amendment by the requisite number of States was not a matter of doubt, and the absolute overthrow of slavery throughout the entire republic dates from the adoption of the amendment to the Constitution in the House of Representatives on the 6th of January, 1865. Illinois, the home of Lincoln, fully led off in ratifying the amendment, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania both ratified on the 8th of February, and one of the most grateful recollections of my life is that, as a member of the popular branch of the Pennsylvania Legislature, I supported and voted for the same. Owing to the delay in the meeting of the Legislature in a

number of the States the official proclamation of the ratification of the amendment was not made until the 18th of December, 1865, on which day Secretary Seward formally declared to the country and the world that the amendment abolishing slavery had "become to all intents and purposes valid as a part of the Constitution of the United States." Lincoln had thus dealt the death blow to slavery by his proclamation, but it was not until after he had sealed his devotion to free government, by giving his life to the assassin's hate, that the great work was consummated and the republic was entirely free from the stain of human bondage.

The most earnest discussions I ever had with Lincoln were on the subject of his emancipation proclamation. I knew the extraordinary pressure that came from the more radical element of the Republican party, embracing a number of its ablest leaders, such as Sumner, Chase, Wade, Chandler and others, but I did not know, and few were permitted to know, the importance of an emancipation policy in restraining the recognition of the Confederacy by France and England. I was earnestly opposed to an emancipation proclamation by the President. For several weeks before it was issued I saw Lincoln frequently, and in several instances sat with him for hours at a time, after the routine business of the day had been disposed of and the doors of the White House were closed. I viewed the issue solely from a political standpoint, and certainly had the best of reasons for the views I pressed upon Lincoln, assuming that political expediency should control his action. I reminded him that the proclamation would not liberate a single slave; that the Southern armies must be overthrown and that the territory held by them must be conquered by military success before it could be made effective. To this Lincoln answered: "It does seem like the Pope's bull against the comet"; but that was the most he ever said in any of his conversations to indicate that he might not issue it. I appealed to him to issue a military order as commander-in-chief of the army and navy, proclaiming that every slave of a rebellious owner should be forever free when brought within our lines. Looking simply to practical results, that would have accomplished everything that the emancipation proclamation achieved; but, it was evident during all these discussions that Lincoln viewed the question from a very much higher standpoint than I did, although, as usual, he said but little and gave no clew to the bent of his mind on the subject.

I reminded Lincoln that political defeat would be inevitable in the great States of the Union in the elections soon to follow if he issued the emancipation proclamation; that New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois would undoubtedly vote Democratic and elect Democratic delegations to the next Congress. He did not dispute my judgment as to the political effect of the proclamation, but I never left him with any reasonable hope that I had seriously impressed him on the subject. Every political prediction I made was fearfully fulfilled in the succeeding October and November elections. New York elected Seymour Governor by 10,700 majority, and chose seventeen Democratic and fourteen Republican Congressmen. New Jersey elected a Democratic Governor by 14,500 and four Democrats and one Republican to Congress. Pennsylvania elected the Democratic State ticket by 3500 majority and 13 Democrats and 11 Republicans to Congress, with a Democratic Legislature that chose Buckalew to the United States Senate. Ohio elected the Democratic State ticket by 5500 majority and 14 Democrats and 2 Republicans to Congress, Ashley and Schenck being the only two who escaped in the political Waterloo. Indiana elected the Democratic State ticket by 9500 majority and 7 Democrats and 4 Republicans to Congress, with 30 Democratic majority in the Legislature. Illinois elected the Democratic State ticket by 16,500 majority and 9 Democrats and 5 Republicans to Congress, and 28 Democratic majority in the Legislature. Confidently anticipating these disastrous political results, I could not conceive it possible for Lincoln to successfully administer the Government and prosecute the war with the six most important loyal States of the Union declaring against him at the polls; but Lincoln knew that the majority in Congress would be safe, as the rebellious States were excluded, and the far West and New England were ready to sustain the emancipation policy; and he appreciated, as I did not, that the magnitude of his act cast all mere considerations of ex-

pediency into nothingness. He dared to do the right for the sake of the right. I speak of this the more freely because, in the light of events as they appear to-day, he rose to the sublimest duty of his life, while I was pleading the mere expedient of a day against a record for human freedom that must be immortal while liberty has worshipers in any land or clime.

Lincoln issued the emancipation proclamation because it was an imperious duty, and because the time had come when any temporizing with the question would have been more fatal than could possibly be any temporary revolt against the manly declaration of right. He felt strong enough to maintain the freedom he proclaimed by the military and naval power of the Government. He believed it to be the most mortal wound that could be inflicted upon the Confederacy. He believed that it would disarm the strong anti-union sentiment that seemed to be fast pressing the English Government to the recognition of the South, and he believed that, however, public sentiment might falter for a time, like the disturbed sea, it would surely settle to the pole. He did not issue it for the mere sentiment of unshackling 4,000,000 of slaves, nor did he then dream of universal citizenship and suffrage to freedmen. In the last public address that he ever delivered, on the 11th of April, 1865, speaking of negro suffrage, he said: "I would myself prefer that suffrage were now conferred upon the very intelligent and on those who served our cause as soldiers." He believed it to be simply an act of justice that every colored man who had fought for his freedom and for the maintenance of the Union and was honorably discharged from the military service should be clothed with the right of franchise; and he believed that "the very intelligent" should also be enfranchised as exemplars of their race and an inspiration to them for advancement. He was always stubbornly for justice, stubbornly for the right, and it was his sublime devotion to the right in the face of the most appalling opposition that made the name of Abraham Lincoln immortal as the author of the emancipation proclamation, on which he justly invoked "the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God."

A. K. McCURE.

THE FREER OF THE SLAVES.

Ex-Confederate Wise Pays a High Tribute to Abraham Lincoln. 1852

BROOKLYN, Feb. 12.—The annual dinner of the Union Leaguo Club was given at the club house to-night. The club at the same time celebrated the birthday anniversary of Lincoln. Addresses were made by John S. Wise to the toast, "Abraham Lincoln;" John C. Burroughs, "A Government of the People;" W. H. Hopburn, "How Shall We Extend the Labor Field of the United States," and Z. P. Pangborn, "The Republicanism of Abraham Lincoln, and Its Lessons for Us To-day."

Mr. Wise said in part: "How long ago it seems since Abraham Lincoln lived and died! Never before have men seen a nation first rent asunder in doubtful fratricidal strife, then reunited and hurried forward, all factions forgetting their bitterness, all knowing that the results reached were best of all, and in which the actors in its bloodiest tragedies, forgetting the passions which stirred them of old, become calm philosophers upon the causes and results of their own struggles. [Applause.] The nomination of Mr. Lincoln I pictured in boyish fancy as the elevation of a bad man by an insane faction, with a cruel purpose. The idea that he or his followers could or would prevail against the power of the South seemed to me utterly preposterous. I laughed in my heart as a schoolboy at the thought that anything could uproot and destroy the whole political fabric by which I was surrounded. Within five years from that time I stood upon the same spot a paroled prisoner of the army of the dead Confederacy."

"The outbreak of the war released Mr. Lincoln from every pledge that he had given to the South while endeavoring to maintain peace. He had the unquestioned right to proclaim the freedom of the slaves as a war measure. A giant casting about him for means of coping with a powerful antagonist found a mighty boulder on a mountain peak, which released, would go thundering down into the valley in which the camp of his enemy was pitched. He saw the danger to his friends as it would leap along the mountain side—yet he knew that it would fall with overwhelming force upon and crush his foes. None but a giant could have climbed the height. Hence this advantage was perceived. None but a giant could have strained with shoulders to the rock until it started from its bed of centuries. None but a bold, strong, independent nature would have assumed all responsibilities for the danger which the step involved to himself, his friends and to his cause. Looking at its consequences, friend and foe alike now concur that it was a matchless stroke of a master hand. [Long and continuous applause.] Lincoln will be remembered for all time to come by friend and foe alike as the great, sad, almost lonely holmsman of the Union in the hour of its peril, who, steered by the unfailing light of a single constellation, who, never veering, was always guided by his self-made chart—"With malice toward none and charity for all," [Applause.]

WAS "ABRAHAM LINCOLN" A FRAUD?

Of all the foolish utterances in the southern press since the election of Grover Cleveland, which they regard as a triumph for the old secessionists, none is more foolish, or at the same time more serious in its malice, than the statement of the *Charleston News and Courier* in regard to Abraham Lincoln. This paper says that the negroes of the South do not revere the name of Lincoln, but that after mature reflection they have come to regard him as "a shrewd western Yankee who freed them for his own political ends and the ends of the party and the section he represented." What political ends of his own did Mr. Lincoln serve? A statement such as we find in the *Charleston News and Courier* can mean but one thing, that is that the freeing of the blacks is still regarded as a mistake in that office. "The disposition that established slavery," said Gov. Boies two years ago in a speech at Kookuk, "still exists." We are prepared to believe it after reading the statement quoted in the *Charleston paper*. And if it is really true that there are colored men in the South who believe that Abraham Lincoln was a charlatan and a demagogue, and who believe that slavery is their natural condition, Heaven pity them. But because they are ignorant is no reason why a civilized country should go on perpetuating barbarism. It may take a century before the light of civilization can penetrate their dark intellects, but with the help of God and the Republican party they will come to a realization of their freedom some day, and they will unlearn the old opinion of Abraham Lincoln which they have learned from their black-hearted traffickers in human flesh. 4. 2. 53

DEATH RECALLS NOTED TRIAL.

1913

David Manuel Was Son-in-Law of Slave Lincoln Prosecuted.

SPECIAL DISPATCH TO THE GLOBE-DEMOCRAT.

CHAMPAIGN, ILL., February 11.—David Manuel, an old negro, has just died in Douglas County, recalling the famous slave trial in which Abraham Lincoln, destined to become the emancipator, appeared for the owner of a slave who refused to accompany his master to Kentucky.

Manuel, who was 85 years old, married a daughter of Simeon Wilmot, the slave arraigned and prosecuted by Lincoln. He often told of the trial, the only one in which the rights of a slave were ever tested in this part of Illinois.

A Kentuckian named Matson, late in the 40s, settled in Douglas County with a number of slaves, whom he treated well, although held in servitude. He decided to return to Kentucky. Neighbors, who had never looked with favor on Matson holding slaves in a free state, advised the slaves to resist removal, encouraged them to run away and in other ways interfered with Matson's plan to take his "chattels" back to the Blue Grass State.

Simeon Wilmot, refusing to obey his master, was arrested under the fugitive slave act. He was tried at Charleston. Matson engaged Lincoln, whom he knew, to prosecute. The settlers engaged Col. O. B. Flicklin. History tells but little of the trial itself, but it is said that Lincoln prosecuted with apparent unwillingness and took only a half-hearted interest in the case. Wilmot was declared a free man, by force of public sentiment rather than a strict interpretation of the law.

For many years the liberated slaves lived in the Brushy Fork neighborhood in Douglas County. They organized a colony and went to Kansas, where a majority of them are said to have died of starvation. A few managed to return to this section.

LINCOLN'S BACK TO WALL IN DARKEST HOUR OF WAR

Disloyal Cabinet and Doubting Senators Made Worse the Disasters in the Field

And I do hereby enjoin upon and order all
persons engaged in the military and naval
service of the United States to observe, obey,
and enforce, within their respective spheres of
service, the act, and sections above recited.
in due time as the said ~~act~~ ^{proclamation} shall require.
And the executive will recommend that
all citizens of the United States, who shall have
remained loyal thereto throughout the rebellion,
shall (upon the restoration of the Constitutional
relations between the United States, and
their respective states, and people, if that relation
shall have been suspended or disturbed) be
compensated for all losses by acts of the rebellion
states, including the loss of slaves.

In witness whereof, I have
S. I. hereunto set my hand, and caused
the seal of the United States to be
affixed.
Done at the City of Washington,
this twenty second day of September,
in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight
hundred and sixty two, and first of the
Independence of the United
States. The eighth month.
Abraham Lincoln.

By the President
William H. Seward,
Secretary of State

Lincoln's Signature on a Preliminary Draft of the
Emancipation Proclamation

Still Thought Him a Weakling

For the time the trouble was over. He had proved the master in the Senatorial attempt to invade his authority. Defeat rarely makes an opponent your friend, particularly an opponent of radical temperament, like Trumbull.

They still believed that Lincoln was a weakling, unable to see the equality of the mastery that he had shown in this contest.

As the year ended he probably summed up the situation in very much the philosophical way that Gideon Welles did in his diary: "The year closed less favorably than I had hoped and expected," Welles wrote the night of Dec 31, "yet some progress had been made. . . . None of us appear to do enough, and yet I am surprised we have done so much."

They had done something men were never to forget. A document lay on Lincoln's office table awaiting his signature, which was the beginning of the end of the legal life of African slavery in the United States.

The Famous Signature

After three hours of New Year's handshaking Lincoln went back to his office for its signing. As he held the pen over the document, he remarked to those who stood by that never in his life had he felt more certain that he was doing right than he did in signing this paper.

"But," he added, "I have been receiving calls and shaking hands since 9 o'clock this morning until my arm is stiff and numb. Now this signature is one that is going to be examined closely, and if they find my hand trembling they will say, 'He did have some compunctions'—anyway, it is going to be done."

We can believe it true, as he said, that he never was surer in his life that he was right. And yet he, better than anyone else, foresaw the difficulties that this act, so right, would bring. His secretaries quote a great remark that he made one day, in discussing the Proclamation—a remark which men who lead in new paths of any nature would do well to ponder:

"We are like whalers who have been on a chase. We have at last got the harpoon into the monster, but we must now look how we stir or with one flop of his tail he will send us all into eternity."

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Boston Globe 5-5-11
Tarbell

Not the same
document

LINCOLN, THE EMANCIPATOR.

Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote of "John Smith as he sees himself, of John Smith as others see him, and of John Smith as God sees him." The esteemed Snn, this morning, wrote of the real Lincoln and of the ideal Lincoln, with a preference for the real, and with no admiration for the other Lincoln. Today, however, is Lincoln's Day. It is not, however, his centennial, for he was born in 1809, not 1813. Neither is today the semi-centennial of Lincoln, for that was away back in 1859. It is, however, the birthday of Lincoln, and it is being celebrated as if it were the semi-centennial of the decree of emancipation, which really befell last January 1.

The jumble of birthday, Emancipation and Lincoln has led, so to speak, to the pooling of anniversaries. Be that as it may, the birthday of the martyr President, the celebration of emancipation, and the belated jubilee demonstration of a race are not unimpressively "mixed" today. And the work of straightening out dates need weigh not too heavily on the morals or the mathematics of any man. To a degree, emancipation is celebrated around this time every year. By the dramatic impressiveness of deimais, the semi-centennial of emancipation is rendered signally suggestive, this year, and this birthday of Lincoln brings the idealization of emancipation and of him to the front.

Aware of the havoc which accuracy and dates play with one another, The Eagle today inclines toward the ideal Lincoln, in distinction from the esteemed Snn's contention for the real Lincoln, and here today the Idealists are in a majority. We can agree with the Snn that Lincoln was a man of deliberation, even of seeming hesitation, and at times of apparently pathetic incertitude; but we think that was due more to the fact that he was waiting for the country to catch up with him rather than for himself to catch up with it. The unreadiness was that of the country, not of him. Weeks before he issued his notice to declare emancipation, he was aware of the heated censure of a great Senator from a great New England State. The morning he did issue his notice to launch emancipation the coming New Year Day, he wrote to that Senator: "I am only three weeks behind you, Mr. Sumner." Mr. Sumner at once abounded with contrition and congratulation. The ideal Lincoln was revealed to him as actually always to have been the real Lincoln, and he remembered Lincoln's declaration, when, as a flatboatman, his heart was wrung on seeing a slave auction at New Orleans: "If I ever get a crack at slavery, it shall be a hard one."

Fifty years ago and more from now, the time came for him to get a crack at it. It was a hard one. The prior unreadiness had been the country's, not his. The unreadiness of the country was all that stood in his way. His reserve, on account of its unreadiness, was wise. When he moved, the North was ready as well as himself. The

Unionists of the Border States were ready as well as himself. By then the Civil War was headed from the Northern side toward its moral goal. By then the Federal arm was increased in strength. By then respect for the Union cause was augmented throughout civilization. To the North was conveyed the pre-assurance, not of liberty without Union, but of "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable." The South should have realized this as well as the North, but did not, perhaps could not. Later, the South did realize it, and wished it had earlier done so. Since then, the South has gratefully realized it, and today, to say the least, equals the North in gratitude that Lincoln foresaw the end from the beginning earlier than either section, but stayed his hand from motives of statesmanship until the crucial hour.

We would not, of course, forget that Lincoln grew and Liberty grew, beyond the fallacy that our Africans could be returned to Africa and would not there relapse to the conditions whence they were wrenched. The North had to be educated out of that error, as well as the Border States. The South hardly needed to be educated out of it, because it then knew, and it now knows, the Negro better than the North did or does. And when Lincoln reached the decision to launch Emancipation his mind went no further on that line. It did not go forward to Suffrage for the Negro. Never for slavery in Kentucky, Indiana or Illinois, he voted in Illinois **Against** Negro Suffrage and never

doubted the wisdom of his vote there and then under circumstances at that time surrounding the State and himself.

The significance of this time relates to Negro Emancipation, not to Negro Suffrage. Emancipation embarrassed the South, eased the conscience of the North, squared the Union with the laws of morals which undergird and overarch the world, and redounds not only to the patriotism, but to the prevision of the Emancipator. The annex or appendix of Negro Suffrage to Negro Emancipation has nowhere worked wholly well. In the North, where the dark race does not number voters enough practically to affect results, that suffrage is regarded as negligible. In the South, where negroes nearly equal, and in parts exceed, whites in number, suffrage has there been so conditioned as to preserve white supremacy, be the number of whites more or less, and to keep the master race on top. Lincoln was under no delusions. To him slavery was not devoid of compensations, but neither the compensations nor the evil altered his conviction: "No man is fit to own another or to be owned by him." Thirteen words those, which compressed a truth on which words without end have been needlessly venied.

The patience of Lincoln made the whole Union the realm of Liberty. His longanimity insured in all the States approbation of Liberty. His magnanimity won all the people to Liberty. His title, the Liberator, is the brightest jewel set by humanity in his crown of memory and of fame. Half a century hence, no negro will be alive whom Lincoln freed. But by then tradition and fable will exceed the tributes evidence renders now. Poetry by imagination and eloquence by inspiration will idealize the Emancipator at the summit of the Golden Age of a transformed Republic. That Golden Age will not be an Age of Gold, and as the glorified conception of Lincoln walks the plains of light, Another will move with him, hand in hand, Whom reverence has long enshrined, and as He moves He will move in the very likeness of the Son of God.

Editor Nonpareil: How susceptible is human nature to the habit of praising the splendid achievements of those things that appeal most to the human heart, and it is right that we do so, for by such acts of devotion we perpetuate our gratitude and appreciation, and it cannot be gainsaid but that such a course is vitalizing to our moral fiber. Take as an example Abraham Lincoln, that equi-poised man, a man of big and sympathetic heart, a man of supreme action, seasoned with "malice toward none and charity for all."

In looking back over history we are seized by an admiration of his indomitable will to do the things as God gave him the light to see them and this in the face of those who called to see him or those who wrote him, touching on the policies to best be pursued to quickly bring about the cessation of the awful hostilities then going on.

Horace Greeley wrote Mr. Lincoln by open letter in the New York Tribune, under date of August 19, 1862, to the effect that Mr. Lincoln at once promulgate a proclamation of emancipation and gave him a hint that the "confiscation act" was not being lived up to and that impatience regarding which was taking hold upon the people.

Let us see how diplomatically and pointedly, seasoned with patience, Mr. Lincoln answered Mr. Greeley: "If there be in it (Mr. Greeley's letter) any statement of assumption of facts which I may know to be erroneous, I do not now and here controvert them."

"If there be any inferences which I may believe to be falsely drawn, I do not now and here argue against them."

"If there is perceptible in it an impatient and dictatorial tone, I waive it in deference to an old friend, whose heart I have always supposed to be right."

"I would save the union. I would save it in the shortest way under the constitution. The sooner the national authority can be restored, the nearer the union will be, the union as it was."

"My paramount object is to save the union and not either to save or destroy slavery."

"If I could save the union without freeing any slaves I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that."

"I have here stated my purpose according to my view of official duty, and I intend no modification of my oft expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free."

On September 13, 1862, a deputation of all the religious denominations of Chicago personally called upon and presented the president a memorial looking toward an early issue of a proclamation of emancipation. Mr. Lincoln replied that it is a subject to which he had given much thought for weeks, and might say, for months, "both by day and by night," and also it was his purpose to know the "will of God" in the matter.

President Lincoln understood the war to have been waged on the institution of slavery, at least had not slavery been in existence the war would not have been. Mr. Davis said it was not, and to the peace commissioners, "You can say to Mr. Lincoln, from me, that I shall at any time be pleased to receive proposals for peace on the basis of our independence. It will be useless to approach me with any other. We are not fighting for slavery, we are fighting for independence and that we will have, or extermination."

What a splendid thing for this country that Mr. Davis' conditions were not accepted.

During the last year much of the history of the civil war was "serialized" in many of the papers and magazines throughout the country by articles "fifty years ago."

By looking backward, how plainly it can be seen that Mr. Lincoln was a great and noble man, who revered God and loved his fellow countrymen with a great love, including those of "previous condition and servitude." A man who in more than one instance placed himself between the findings of a court martial and a firing squad ordered to shoot to death that young and brave lad who unfortunately gave way to sleep while on sentinel duty.

The articles of war, of course, authorized such findings upon proper evidence, and yet the magnanimity of a great soul overtook and withheld the final culmination that was about to take place.

Such characters as those of Washington and Lincoln can pass away either under peaceful dissolution or in a tragic way, yet, as Garfield said: "The government at Washington still lives."

J. M. OURSLER,
Council Bluffs, Ia., Feb. 8, 1915.

Lincoln Freed the Slaves to Tune of the Telegraph

Christian Science Monitor 2/12/26
Western Union Story Has It That He Wrote
Emancipation Proclamation in Wire Room

During this month, which records the anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, many stories are being told of incidents in the life of the great statesman. One of these comes from "the News Sheet," issued by the Western Union Telegraph Company and gives a new and interesting view of Lincoln, describing him as writing the Emancipation Proclamation as he listened in the telegraph office of the War Department to stirring accounts from the battle field.

That there should be abundant inspiration for the penning of such a document in the stories of sacrifice and hope, leaping over the immature telegraph line of that day, is not exceptional. Perhaps it was the same quality of inspiration that came to Francis Scott Key in Baltimore Harbor as he, a prisoner on a British man-of-war, penned "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Refuge in Telegraph Office

Throughout the war one of Lincoln's places of refuge from the trials of office was the telegraph office in the War Department; an obviously strange place to seek surcease from the care and responsibility of an unenviable office, a place where dots and dashes flashed tragedy and the cruelties of war.

Yet there this silent figure could be found reading over the messages as they came in from the cipher clerks, placing them in a pile in the drawer, making little comment and keeping himself well out of the way of busy clerks who passed back and forth like the shuttles of a great loom weaving a fabric of gray like a mist over a troubled sea.

In times of stress the President stood behind the cipher clerk reading as fast as the words were translated. Ordinarily, when he came to the office he took a chair by the receipt drawer, reading over the telegrams, beginning at the top and continuing until he had reached the ones he had read on his last visit.

In the telegraph office, strenuous as it was gleaned wheat from the chaff of war, Lincoln found it less a strain than in the White House where he was constantly besieged by politicians, office seekers and a pestering crowd and he remarked to his Secretary of War, Mr. Stanton, that he was glad to come to the telegraph office to be relieved of their importunings.

Often he would remain there all night, awaiting some important expected dispatch; often in the interval sending messages of inquiry, counsel and encouragement to the commanders in the field, to the governors of the states and not infrequently to soldiers commending them for bravery or pardoning for violation of some of the rules of war.

Begins the Proclamation

It was while sitting in this little room, so the story goes, that Lincoln

began the first draft of the Emancipation Proclamation. While the wires flashed their messages, so fraught with meaning for the people of the North as well as the South, his pencil traveled over the page, slowly, thoughtfully and with rare consideration. On the first day, it is related, he did not cover the first sheet on which he was composing. On some days he wrote but a line or two, weighing each word with the care of an essayist evaluating fine gold.

Each day he would read over what he had written, changing, revising, amending to the ever present click-click, click-click of the crude telegraph instrument, a tireless staccato that seemed a fitting motif for this great instrument of freedom. This went on for several weeks until the first draft was completed.

And curiously enough the President said he had been able to work more quietly and maintain a better command of his thoughts than at the White House.

This document, then said to have been born almost literally on the field of battle, was given to the world on Jan. 1, 1863 and today is called one of the greatest documents of state in history.

**Lincoln's Real Attitude With Regard
To Emancipation Recalled In Con-
nection With The Anniversary Of
His Birth.**

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Nothing in American history is more misleading than the ideas associated with Lincoln and the particular subject of emancipation. The war President would himself have claimed no more renown as a great emancipator than Lord Dunmore, who issued his proclamation of emancipation in 1776.

Lincoln said his measure was a war measure, and, except on that ground, he was opposed to it. Lord Dunmore's proclamation of emancipation was also a war measure, and if the British had suppressed the rebellion of the colonies the slaves of George Washington and his compatriots would have been set free, although there may be this difference between the two leaders in that Lincoln, like Jefferson, was in favor of emancipation, whereas Dunmore may not have cared one way or another.

Lincoln's purpose was to preserve the Union, which he thought could be and should be preserved by war, while Horace Greeley and a very large element declared that no Union could be preserved if "pinned together with bayonets." To accomplish this purpose, Abraham Lincoln would have been in favor of restoring the Union with or without slavery. In fact, Lincoln sanctioned the original form of the Thirteenth Amendment, which sought to make it constitutionally impossible for the Federal Government to interfere with slavery where it existed!

Prior to the war Lincoln had endorsed the position of the free Negroes of Baltimore, who protested against the agitation of the abolitionists on the ground that it interfered with the emancipation movement; and in the fifties Maryland alone had over 80,000 free Negroes in her borders.

When in Congress Abraham Lincoln sponsored a fugitive slave bill. Hence, by all means, let us have done with this foolish sentimentality on February 12. Lincoln was superior to all this and had he been left alone by fanatics, on one side, and partisans, on the other, the country would have been spared untold suffering, and emancipation would have come by peace and not as an incidental outcome of a war begun on sectional, political and especially economic grounds.

PETER PARLEY, JR.

Baltimore, Feb. 8, 1927.

- 12

831 Dartmouth Avenue
Claremont, California
18 August 1936

Mr. Louis A. Warren
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Mr. Warren

I am preparing a biography of Sir Robert Stout, former Premier and Chief Justice of New Zealand. On the sheet which I enclose herewith is a portion of a newspaper report of one of his political addresses. I am eager to discover what biography of Lincoln Sir Robert was quoting from. As yet I have not discovered one which contains the passage he must have been quoting or paraphrasing. Perhaps your Research Foundation may be able to help me. Unfortunately Sir Robert's books had been widely dispersed and I was not able to find all the books on Lincoln which he possessed. I spent a good part of 1932-1933 working in New Zealand on the collection of material.

If your Foundation is still publishing LINCOLN LORE I should be glad to receive copies regularly.

With regards and appreciation, I am

Yours sincerely

Waldo H. Dunn

On 14 April (1885) Premier Robert Stout of New Zealand gave a political address at Auckland. In the course of his remarks he said:

I remember coming to this one passage in the life of Abraham Lincoln ... He was twitted by some Northern men who were really in favour of Southern slavery. "Why did not Abraham Lincoln, if he was really sincere in abolition, at once publish a proclamation when he assumed office, freeing the slaves? ... his biographer ... says ... "Doubtless he had an ideal, but it was the ideal of a practical statesman, to aim at the best, and to take the next best, if he is lucky enough to get even that."

August 26, 1936

Mr. Waldo H. Dunn
831 Dartmouth Avenue
Claremont, California

My dear Mr. Dunn:

We cannot seem to find here in our library any reference of Lincoln's attitude toward the Emancipation Proclamation which was the source, apparently, of Robert Stout's reminiscence with respect to Lincoln's attitude toward the issue.

If you have access to a file of Lincoln Lore you will find that No. 195 discusses the preliminary steps to the Emancipation, which I think indicates Lincoln had rather a fairly well defined program in front of him.

If you cannot discover this issue of Lincoln Lore I should be pleased to have a photostat made for you.

Your name is being put on our mailing list to receive subsequent issues.

Very truly yours

LAW:LH

Director

Abraham Lincoln

WITH the Bible itself as the only exception, and certainly without any exception whatever in the works of the world's greatest leaders in peace and war, the written and spoken words of Abraham Lincoln convey inspiration and instruction beyond anything else available in the vast fields of literature and history.

It has been noted with admiration and wonder by all who have studied the voluminous writings and speeches of Lincoln, and even the casual conversations remembered by his friends and associates, that there was scarcely a paragraph or sentence or phrase without lasting interest and significance.

Mr. Lincoln had the richest of all instincts, which is rare in even the greatest of men, that of making words expressive of the spiritual heights toward which his mind and his soul were always reaching.

It was his love for his fellow men and his reverence for the divine authority of the universe which seemed to shape his every utterance, and the good opinion of men and the blessing of God were the objects of his constant aspiration.

* * *

THERE is a story which is told of one of the great moments of his career, and which is illustrative of the supreme importance he attached to what men might think of what he did, and particularly of the manner in which he so earnestly desired that it should fit the pattern of God's design for mankind.

The story concerns the occasion when Mr. Lincoln had completed the difficult task of writing the Emancipa-

tion Proclamation, and was appraising it in his own mind in an effort to assure himself that it fully accomplished its purpose.

It was to raise all the men of the earth to a new level of dignity and respect, and Mr. Lincoln had written it with that intent and had made sure that everything he intended was properly and clearly expressed, or so he had supposed.

But somehow he was not entirely satisfied with the result, and thoughtfully he pondered the text, striving to learn what it was that was in his heart but was not on the paper.

And suddenly Mr. Lincoln seized the pen and wrote the lines that were to be the closing paragraph of the immortal proclamation:

"And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice warranted by the Constitution, I invoke the considerate judgement of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God."

* * *

MR. LINCOLN wanted more than the freedom of the slaves, which the first draft of the proclamation had already accomplished.

He wanted to be sure that his fellow countrymen and all the people of the earth would look with favor upon what he had done, and he wanted to bespeak that approval; but most of all he wanted to petition for God's blessing upon his act.

The spiritual richness of the works of Abraham Lincoln is one of the great treasures of the world, and it is inexhaustible, and it is our American heritage.

Lincoln's Real Attitude on Emancipation

Slaves Weren't Freed Exactly As He Wished

WHEN PRESIDENT Abraham Lincoln delivered his first inaugural address, March 4, 1861, he tried to reassure the South that he had no intention of disturbing slavery within the slave states.

Repeating what he had publicly stated before, he declared: "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the states where it exists."



A. T. BURCH

This was consistent with the Republican platform of 1860, which had recognized the right of "each state to control its domestic institutions."

In the Republican Party there were abolitionists who wanted to destroy slavery everywhere instantly. But in the few years of its existence, the party had swept to power in the North by fighting to prevent the extension of slavery to the territories and new states to be formed from them.

Like Lincoln, most Republicans abhorred slavery as an evil. But their official program, at the time, was to "contain it," to borrow a phrase once current in the international struggle against communism in our own generation.

Despite Lincoln's assurance to the slave states in March, 1861, on Sept. 22, 1862—exactly 100 years ago today—he issued his preliminary Emancipation Proclamation.

THIS BIG change involved no breach of promise. When Lincoln was inaugurated, seven states of the deep South, led by South Carolina, had already seceded from the Union. By conciliatory measures, Lincoln and innumerable other Northerners hoped these states might be persuaded to return to the Union.

None did so. After Confederate forces fired on Ft. Sumter, Lincoln called for troops to carry out his pledge to "possess" federal property in the South.

Shocked by what they considered this attempt to "coerce" their neighbors, four states that had hitherto refused to secede joined the Confederacy—Virginia, Arkansas,

Tennessee, and North Carolina.

Union feeling was strong in all of them, but it yielded to sectional loyalty at the shock of battle.

Northern military power prevented secession by the other slave states: Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland, and Delaware. In all of them many people were devoted to the Union, despite the influence of influential pro-slavery, pro-Confederate public officials.

Proclamation Freed No Slaves

The proclamation Lincoln issued on Sept. 22, 1862, itself freed no slave anywhere. It declared his intention to free the slaves in unspecified states and parts of states still in rebellion on Jan. 1, 1863. Lincoln hoped that some of the seceded states would meantime return to the union.

Theoretically, if all had



GEN. BUTLER



GEN. FREMONT

Key figures in abolition of slavery

chosen to return, slavery could have been perpetuated indefinitely in all the states where the people wanted it.

act of justice warranted by the constitution, "upon military necessity."

North, South, and abroad, many people noted that the proclamations had not freed a single slave where the federal government had, at the mo-

WHEN Jan. 1 came, Lincoln declared the slaves free in all the states that had seceded from the union, except Tennessee. There Union forces were largely in control, although hard fighting was ahead to maintain their hold.

Slaves were not to be freed in 13 Louisiana parishes, including the city of New Orleans, occupied by Union forces. Neither were slaves to be freed in seven counties of secessionist Virginia, including the city of Norfolk, these counties being under Union control.

Slaves were not to be freed in any of the slave states that had not seceded, including the new state of West Virginia, comprising 48 counties that had set up a state government separate from the Old Dominion.

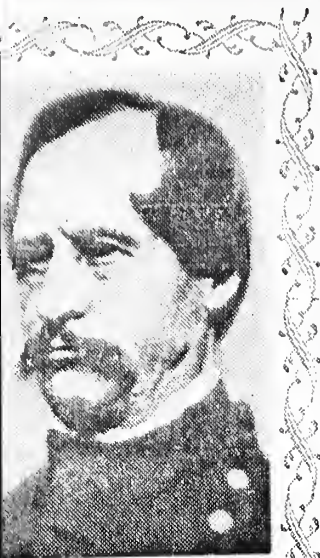
Action Termed Military Necessity

The final sentence of the January proclamation asserted Lincoln's faith that it was an

ment, power to act. The London Spectator sneered: "The principle is not that a human being cannot justly own another, but that he cannot own



GEN. MCCLELLAN



GEN. HUNTER

him unless he is loyal to the United States."

LONG * BEFORE, several Union commanders in the field had undertaken emancipation of slaves within their military jurisdiction on the ground of military necessity.

The war was scarcely a month old when Gen. Benjamin Butler, at Ft. Monroe, Va., received fugitive slaves within his lines and put them to work. On May 24 he refused a formal demand from the owner of three slaves for their return.

Butler declared they were "contraband of war," since they had previously been compelled to work on Confederate emplacements. Butler's reply made the word "contraband" current to designate any slave fleeing to the protection of the Union army.

Fremont Declares Martial Law

Engaged in bitter guerilla warfare in Missouri, Gen. John Charles Fremont declared martial law throughout the state on Aug. 30, 1861. He proclaimed that the property of all persons resisting the United States was forfeited and their slaves made free men.

In a letter, Lincoln ordered Fremont to rescind this order. Fremont answered he would not comply unless Lincoln commanded him publicly to do so, in order that people would know Fremont had not changed his own mind. Lincoln issued a public command, and Fremont obeyed.

After a romantic career exploring the West and mining California gold, Fremont had been the Republican Party's first candidate for president in 1856. Abolitionists praised him for his attempt to liberate the slaves in Missouri, and condemned Lincoln.

Despite Fremont's military and administrative failures in the war, a faction nominated him for president again in 1864 at a rump convention in Cleveland. His premature effort at emancipation in Missouri had made him a hero to the participants.

After Sherman captured Atlanta, there was a resurgence of support for Lincoln and Fremont withdrew his candidacy.

Lincoln Writes Of His Doubts

In a letter about the Fremont affair to his old Illinois friend, Sen. Orville H. Browning, Lincoln expressed views directly contrary to those in the Emancipation Proclamation about the constitutionality of emancipation by presidential authority based on the commander-in-chief's war powers.

"Can it be pretended," Lincoln wrote, "that it is any longer the government of the United States—any government of Constitution and laws—when ever a general, or a President, may make permanent rules of property by proclamation?"

"What I object to is that I as President shall expressly or impliedly seize and exercise the legislative functions of the government."

Passing from principle to expediency, Lincoln expressed to Browning his belief that Fremont's order, if not countermanded, would have lost Kentucky to the Union, and Missouri and Maryland in turn.

IN MAY, 1862, Gen. David Hunter was Union commander of the Department of the South, holding a stretch of coast line. From Hilton Head, S.C., he issued an order undertaking to free all slaves in Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina. Lincoln countermanded the order, reserving the question of "military necessity" to himself.

Lincoln knew Hunter well, but his rebuke was stern. Hunter had a Chicago background. In 1829 he had married the daughter of John Kin-



zie, the pioneer fur-trader who lived at the mouth of the Chicago River at the time of the Fort Dearborn massacre.

Congress Works At Emancipation

Prior to Aug. 22, 1862, Congress itself had not been wholly idle with respect to emancipation. On Aug. 6, 1861, it passed the first Confiscation Act, authorizing liberation of slaves actually used in Confederate military operations, as laborers or otherwise. This ratified Ben Butler's policy at Fort Monroe, which he pursued later at New Orleans.

In April, 1862, Congress abolished slavery in the District of Columbia, compensating owners at the rate of \$300 a slave. On June 18, it abolished slavery in the territories, without compensation.

On July 17, it passed the Second Confiscation Act, freeing the slaves of all persons supporting the rebellion. This act went almost as far as Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. The act applied to the property (including slaves) of disloyal individuals. The proclamation applied to all slaves in the designated states and areas, regardless of the views and conduct of the owners. The proclamation of Sept. 22, however, recommended compensation in due time to owners who had been loyal.

Lincoln Wanted Gradual Approach

Lincoln had always believed in gradual, compensated emancipation, and hoped for the colonization of Negroes elsewhere, with their consent and the consent of the governments of countries where they might go. These ideas he expressed again in the First Emancipation Proclamation.

In repeated messages, Lincoln urged this policy on Congress. In April, 1862, it had adopted a resolution favoring this policy in principle, but providing no appropriation. Repeatedly, Lincoln tried to persuade the loyal border states to emancipate their slaves with his promise of support for compensation.

Actually, the federal government paid no compensation to any slave owner, loyal or Confederate, North or South, except in the District of Columbia. The 14th Amendment to the Constitution, adopted after the end of the war, forbade the United States or any state to pay any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave.

IN THE short run, Lincoln might have achieved as much practically by vigorous support of the second Confiscation Act as he did by his emancipation proclamations. But shortly after its enactment he gave consideration to going beyond its terms in a presidential proclamation. He submitted a tenta-

tive draft to his cabinet on July 22, 1862.

Postmaster Gen. Montgomery Blair opposed it, fearing it would cost Lincoln's party the loss of the congressional elections in November. Sec. of State William H. Seward, while approving it, recommended that the proclamation be deferred until the North should gain some notable military success. Lincoln agreed.

Gen. George B. McClellan's repulse of Lee's invasion of Maryland at the battle of Antietam, September 17, provided the first occasion. Lincoln's later disappointment over McClellan's failure to follow up his victory led him to dismiss the general from command.

McClellan Role Cited As Ironic

In his "War Without Grant," Col. Robert R. McCormick points out the irony in McClellan's being an instrument of emancipation, since McClellan did not favor liberating the slaves.

In 1864 McClellan was the Democratic candidate for President, personally favoring a fight to victory in the war to preserve the Union, despite a plank in the Democratic platform denouncing the war as a failure and urging a military truce.

But McClellan was one of the many Democrats standing for "the Constitution as it is, the Union as it was"—that is, with slavery undisturbed in the slave states.

* * *

BLAIR'S dire prediction of the political consequence of the proclamation almost came true. The Republican Party barely retained control of Congress in the 1862 elections. Lincoln's own state was one where it suffered staggering defeat.

In the long run, however, Lincoln's proclamations won strength for the Union cause in the North and abroad. People forgot the limitations in the text.

The proclamations helped to convert the war in its latter stages to a fight for human freedom as well as for the preservation of the Union. By the end of the war, more than 175,000 Negroes were serving in the Union armies, many in combat.

Before the end of the war, West Virginia, Maryland, Missouri and "reconstructed" Tennessee had abolished slavery, though Kentucky and Delaware would not. The federal fugitive slaves acts of 1793 and 1850 were not repealed until June 28, 1864.

13th Amendment Ended Slavery

The extinction of slavery was achieved by the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, proposed by Sen. Lyman Trumbull of Illinois and vigorously supported by Lincoln. The resolution to submit it was passed by the Senate April 8, 1864. Heavy administration pressure was required to get it through the House, after earlier failure, on Jan. 31, 1865.

Lincoln did not live to see the 13th Amendment ratified. He died of an assassin's bullet on April 15, 1865. The 13th Amendment was proclaimed as part of the Constitution in December, 1865.

Lincoln had earned the title by which he was known to later generations although emancipation did not take place exactly in the form and manner that the Great Emancipator had desired. He wanted it to come gradually and with compensation—a change, in his own words, that "would come gently as the dews of heaven, not rending or wrecking anything."

SERMON FOR TODAY

By Rev. John R. Gunn

The Emancipation Proclamation

"Zedekiah made a covenant . . . to proclaim liberty . . . that every one should let his manservant, and everyone his maidservant go free." — Jer. 34: 9-10.

This proclamation of liberty was the greatest action taken by Zedekiah during his reign as king of Judah. We are reminded of another such proclamation, made by Abraham Lincoln.

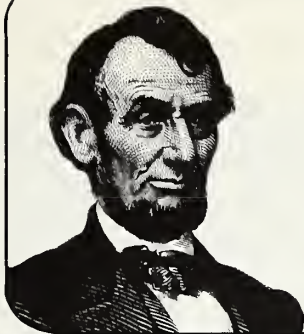
In the White House, late in the evening of Dec. 31, 1862, Lincoln was bidding the members of his cabinet good night. "Don't work too late, Mr. President," said one, as he took his leave. "I won't," replied the President, "but I have a little writing to do first." The writing he did that night has become an immortal document. It was the final draft of the Emancipation Proclamation, to which on the morrow, New Year's Day, he should sign his name.

All New Year's morning and well into the afternoon the White House was filled with callers, and the President was kept busy greeting and shaking hands with them. The rush over, he sought the quiet of the executive chamber. He took from the drawer the manuscript of the Proclamation, laying it unfolded upon the table in front of him. From a pen rack he took a short steel pen.

"Seward," he said, half quizzically, turning to his secretary of state, "if I am to be remembered in history at all, it will probably be in connection with this piece of paper!" His hand was shaking as he sat down in the chair before the table. "I have been shaking hands with people for three mortal hours," he said, "and my hand trembles. If it trembles when I sign this, they will say I was afraid to sign it." With a half-smile over his shoulder, he laid down the pen.

Picking it up, calmly, and without a quiver of a muscle in hand or arm, he signed his name. Clear, bold, and legible, it stood out on the white parchment, as though to mark the immortality of Abraham Lincoln.

When we observe the birthday of the Great Emancipator, we may well reflect upon the blessing that has resulted to the nation and humanity from that immortal document — THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION.



Lincoln Lore

January, 1980

Bulletin of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum. Mark E. Neely, Jr., Editor.
Mary Jane Hubler, Editorial Assistant. Published each month by the
Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801.

Number 1703

LINCOLN AND SLAVERY: AN OVERVIEW

Abraham Lincoln was a native of a slave state, Kentucky. In 1811 Hardin County, where Lincoln was born two years before, contained 1,007 slaves and 1,627 white males above the age of sixteen. His father's brother Mordecai owned a slave. His father's Uncle Isaac may have owned over forty slaves. The Richard Berry family, with whom Lincoln's mother Nancy Hanks lived before her marriage to Thomas Lincoln, owned slaves. Thomas and Nancy Lincoln, however, were members of a Baptist congregation which had separated from another church because of opposition to slavery. This helps explain Lincoln's statement in 1864 that he was "naturally anti-slavery" and could "not remember when I did not so think, and feel." In 1860 he claimed that his father left Kentucky for Indiana's free soil "partly on account of slavery."

Nothing in Lincoln's political career is inconsistent with his claim to have been "naturally anti-slavery." In 1836, when resolutions came before the Illinois House condemning abolitionism, declaring that the Constitution sanctified the right of property in slaves, and denying the right of Congress to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, Lincoln was one of six to vote against them (seventy-seven voted in favor). Near the end of the term, March 3, 1837, Lincoln and fellow Whig Dan Stone wrote a protest against the resolutions which stated that "the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy." It too denounced abolitionism as more likely to exacerbate than abate the evils of slavery and asserted the right of Congress to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia (though the right should not be exercised without the consent of the District's citizens). Congress, of course, had no right to interfere with slavery in the states. In 1860 Lincoln could honestly point to the consistency of his antislavery convictions over the last twenty-three years. That early protest "briefly defined his position on the slavery question; and so far as it goes, it was then the same that it is now."

In his early political career in the 1830s and 1840s, Lincoln had faith in the benign operation of American political institutions. Though "opposed to slavery" throughout the period,

he "rested in the hope and belief that it was in course of ultimate extinction." For that reason, it was only "a minor question" to him. For the sake of keeping the nation together, Lincoln thought it "a paramount duty" to leave slavery in the states alone. He never spelled out the basis of his faith entirely, but he had confidence that the country was ever seeking to approximate the ideals of the Declaration of Independence. All men would be free when slavery, restricted to the areas where it already existed, exhausted the soil, became unprofitable, and was abolished by the slave-holding states themselves or perhaps by numerous individual emancipations. Reaching this goal, perhaps by the end of the century, required of dutiful politicians only "that we should never knowingly lend ourselves directly or indirectly, to prevent . . . slavery from dying a natural death — to find new places for it to live in, when it can no longer exist in the old." This statement, made in 1845, expressed Lincoln's lack of

concern over the annexation of Texas, where slavery already existed. As a Congressman during the Mexican War, Lincoln supported the Wilmot Proviso because it would prevent the growth of slavery in parts of the Mexican cession where the institution did not already exist. He still considered slavery a "distracting" question, one that might destroy America's experiment in popular government if politicians were to "enlarge and aggravate" it either by seeking to expand slavery or to attack it in the states.

Lincoln became increasingly worried around 1850 when he read John C. Calhoun's denunciations of the Declaration of Independence. When he read a similar denunciation by a Virginia clergyman, he grew more upset. Such things undermined his confidence because they showed that some Americans did not wish to approach the ideals of the Declaration of Independence; for some, they were no longer ideals at all. But these were the statements of a society directly interested in the preservation of the institution, and Lincoln did not become enough alarmed to aggravate the slave question. He began even to lose interest in politics.

The passage of Stephen A. Douglas's Kansas-Nebraska Act



From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 1. Like many other prints of Lincoln published soon after his death, this one celebrated the Emancipation Proclamation as his greatest act.

in 1854 changed all this. Lincoln was startled when territory previously closed to slavery was opened to the possibility of its introduction by local vote. He was especially alarmed at the fact that this change was led by a Northerner with no direct interest in slavery to protect.

In 1841 Lincoln had seen a group of slaves on a steamboat being sold South from Kentucky to a harsher (so he assumed) slavery. Immediately after the trip, he noted the irony of their seeming contentment with their lot. They had appeared to be the happiest people on board. After the Kansas-Nebraska Act, he wrote about the same episode, still vivid to him, as "a continual torment to me." Slavery, he said, "has, and continually exercises, the power of making me miserable."

Lincoln repeatedly stated that slaveholders were no worse than Northerners would be in the same situation. Having inherited an undesirable but socially explosive political institution, Southerners made the best of a bad situation. Like all Americans before the Revolution, they had denounced Great Britain's forcing slavery on the colonies with the slave trade, and, even in the 1850s, they admitted the humanity of the Negro by despising those Southerners who dealt with the Negro as property, pure and simple — slave traders. But he feared that the ability of Northerners to see that slavery was morally wrong was in decline. This, almost as surely as disunion, could mean the end of the American experiment in freedom, for any argument for slavery which ignored the moral wrong of the institution could be used to enslave any man, white or black. If lighter men were to enslave darker men, then "you are to be slave to the first man you meet, with a fairer skin than your own." If superior intellect determined masters, then "you are to be slave to the first man you meet, with an intellect superior to your own." Once the moral distinction between slavery and freedom were forgotten, nothing could stop its spread. It was "founded in the selfishness of man's nature," and that selfishness could overcome any barriers of climate or geography.

By 1856 Lincoln was convinced that the "sentiment in favor of white slavery . . . prevailed in all the slave state papers, except those of Kentucky, Tennessee and Missouri and Maryland." The people of the South had "an immediate palpable and immensely great pecuniary interest" in the question; "while, with the people of the North, it is merely an abstract question of moral right." Unfortunately, the latter formed a looser bond than economic self-interest in two billion dollars worth of slaves. And the Northern ability to resist was steadily undermined by the moral indifference to slavery epitomized by Douglas's willingness to see slavery voted up or down in the territories. The Dred Scott decision in 1857 convinced Lincoln that the Kansas-Nebraska Act had been the beginning of a conspiracy to make slavery perpetual, national, and universal. His House-Divided Speech of 1858 and his famous debates with Douglas stressed the specter of a conspiracy to nationalize slavery.

Lincoln's claims in behalf of the slaves were modest and did not make much of the Negro's abilities outside of slavery. The Negro "is not my equal . . . in color, perhaps not in moral or intellectual endowment," Lincoln said, but "in the right to put into his mouth the bread that his own hands have earned, he is the equal of every other man, white or black." Lincoln objected to slavery primarily because it violated the doctrine of the equality of all men announced in the Declaration of Independence. "As I would not be a *slave*, so I would not be a *master*," Lincoln said. "This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is no democracy."

Lincoln had always worked on the assumption that the Union was more important than abolishing slavery. As long as the country was approaching the ideal of freedom for all men, even if it took a hundred years, it made no sense to destroy the freest country in the world. When it became apparent to Lincoln that the country might not be approaching that ideal, it somewhat confused his thinking. In 1854 he admitted that as "Much as I hate slavery, I would consent to the extension of it rather than see the Union dissolved, just as I would consent to any GREAT evil, to avoid a GREATER one." As his fears of a conspiracy to nationalize

slavery increased, he ceased to make such statements. In the secession crisis he edged closer toward making liberty more important than Union. In New York City on February 20, 1861, President-elect Lincoln said:

There is nothing that can ever bring me willingly to consent to the destruction of this Union, under which . . . the whole country has acquired its greatness, unless it were to be that thing for which the Union itself was made. I understand a ship to be made for the carrying and preservation of the cargo, and so long as the ship can be saved, with the cargo, it should never be abandoned. This Union should likewise never be abandoned unless it fails and the probability of its preservation shall cease to exist without throwing the passengers and cargo overboard. So long, then, as it is possible that the prosperity and the liberties of the people can be preserved in the Union, it shall be my purpose at all times to preserve it.

The Civil War saw Lincoln move quickly to save the Union by stretching and, occasionally, violating the Constitution. Since he had always said that constitutional scruple kept him from bothering slavery in the states, it is clear that early in the war he was willing to go much farther to save the Union than he was willing to go to abolish slavery. Yet he interpreted it as his constitutional duty to save the Union, even if to do so he had to violate some small part of that very Constitution. There certainly was no constitutional duty to do anything about slavery. For over a year, he did not.

On August 22, 1862, Lincoln responded to criticism from Horace Greeley by stating his slavery policy:

If there be those who would not save the Union, unless they could at the same time *save* slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time *destroy* slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is *not* either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing *any* slave I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing *all* the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that. What I do about slavery, and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do *not* believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do *less* whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do *more* whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors; and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views.

I have here stated my purpose according to my view of *official* duty; and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed *personal* wish that all men every where could be free.

The Emancipation Proclamation, announced just one month later, was avowedly a military act, and Lincoln boasted of his consistency almost two years later by saying, "I have done no official act in mere deference to my abstract judgment and feeling on slavery."

Nevertheless, he had changed his mind in some regards. Precisely one year before he issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, Lincoln had criticized General John C. Frémont's emancipation proclamation for Missouri by saying that "as to . . . the liberation of slaves" it was "*purely political*, and not within the range of *military* law, or necessity."

If a commanding General finds a necessity to seize the farm of a private owner, for a pasture, an encampment, or a fortification, he has the right to do so, and to so hold it, as long as the necessity lasts; and this is within military law, because within military necessity. But to say the farm shall no longer belong to the owner, or his heirs forever; and this as well when the farm is not needed for military purposes as when it is, is purely political, without the savor of military law about it. And the same is true of slaves. If the General needs them, he can seize them, and use them; but when the need is past, it is not for him to fix their permanent future

condition. That must be settled according to laws made by law-makers, and not by military proclamations. The proclamation in the point in question, is simply "dictatorship." It assumes that the general may do *anything* he pleases—confiscate the lands and free the slaves of loyal people, as well as of disloyal ones. And going the whole figure I have no doubt would be more popular with some thoughtless people, than that which has been done! But I cannot assume this reckless position; nor allow others to assume it on my responsibility. You speak of it as being the only means of saving the government. On the contrary it is itself the surrender of the government. Can it be pretended that it is any longer the government of the U.S. — any government of Constitution and laws, — wherein a General, or a President, may make permanent rules of property by proclamation?

I do not say Congress might not with propriety pass a law, on the point, just such as General Fremont proclaimed. I do not say I might not, as a member of Congress, vote for it. What I object to, is, that I as President, shall expressly or impliedly seize and exercise the permanent legislative functions of the government.

Critics called this inconsistency; Lincoln's admirers have called it "growth." Whatever the case, just as Lincoln's love of Union caused him to handle the Constitution somewhat roughly, so his hatred of slavery led him, more slowly, to treat the Constitution in a manner inconceivable to him in 1861. Emancipation, if somewhat more slowly, was allowed about the same degree of constitutional latitude the Union earned in Lincoln's policies.

The destruction of slavery never became the avowed object of the war, but by insisting on its importance, militarily, to saving the Union, Lincoln made it constitutionally beyond criticism and, in all that really mattered, an aim of the war. In all practical applications, it was a condition of peace — and was so announced in the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction of December 8, 1863, and repeatedly defended in administration statements thereafter. He reinforced this fusion of aims by insisting that the Confederacy was an attempt to establish "a new Nation, . . . with the primary, and fundamental object to maintain, enlarge, and perpetuate human slavery," thus making the enemy and slavery one and the same.

Only once did Lincoln apparently change his mind. In the desperately gloomy August of 1864, when defeat for the administration seemed certain, Lincoln bowed to pressure from Henry J. Raymond long enough to draft a letter empowering Raymond to propose peace with Jefferson Davis on the condition of reunion alone, all other questions (including slavery, of course) to be settled by a convention

afterwards. Lincoln never finished the letter, and the offer was never made. Moreover, as things looked in August, Lincoln was surrendering only what he could not keep anyway. He was so convinced that the Democratic platform would mean the loss of the Union, that he vowed in secret to work to save the Union before the next President came into office in March. He could hope for some cooperation from Democrats in this, as they professed to be as much in favor of Union as the Republicans. Without the Union, slavery could not be abolished anyhow, and the Democrats were committed to restoring slavery.

Lincoln had made abolition a party goal in 1864 by making support for the Thirteenth Amendment a part of the Republican platform. The work he performed for that measure after his election proved that his antislavery views had not abated. Near the end of his life, he repeated in a public speech one of his favorite arguments against slavery: "Whenever [I] hear any one, arguing for slavery I feel a strong impulse to see it tried on him personally."



From the Louis A. Warren
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FIGURE 3. This Indianapolis edition of the Emancipation Proclamation, published in 1886, obviously copied the edition in Figure 2. Note, however, that the harsher scenes of slavery are removed — a sign of the post-Reconstruction political ethos.

